

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
ACDA-07 AID-05 IGA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /071 W
-----181600Z 122161 /53

R 181252Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4368

INFO DOD WASHDC/ISA

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONROVIA 2592

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, PFOR, LI, GV

SUBJECT: GOL ATTITUDE TOWARD U.S. MILITARY MISSION TO LIBERIA

REF: (A) MONROVIA 2369 (NOTAL), (B) 080011 (NOTAL)

1. THE EMBASSY HAS EXPLAINED TO THE GOL THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STATEMENT BY DAS SEELYE MARCH 29 REGARDING A "PHASE-OUT" OF THE U.S. MILITARY MISSION TO LIBERIA IN 1980, BY MEANS OF A NOTE TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND A LETTER FROM THE CHIEF, U.S. MILITARY MISSION TO DEFENSE MINISTER GREAVES. IN BOTH CASES, THE POINTS RAISED IN REFTEL (B) WERE EMPHASIZED AND COPIES PROVIDED OF THE SEELYE TESTIMONY AND OF MS. BENSON'S REMARKS MARCH 30 BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS, HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE.

2. IN A CONVERSATION WITH THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR APRIL 14, CHRIS MINIKON, ASSISTANT MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FOR AMERICAN AFFAIRS, REITERATED THE GOL VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE TO IT OF THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF A U.S. MILITARY MISSION IN LIBERIA. MINIKON STATED THAT THE GOL IS CONVINCED THAT THE MERE PRESENCE IN LIBERIA OF A U.S. MILITARY MISSION, THOUGH SMALL IN NUMBER, ACTS AS A DETERRENT TO NEIGHBORS WHO MIGHT
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HAVE AGGRESSIVE INTENTIONS AGAINST LIBERIA. THE GOL BELIEVES, MINIKON STATED, THAT WERE IT NOT FOR THE PRESENCE OF THE USMM, SOME KIND OF BORDER INTRUSIONS WOULD ALREADY HAVE TAKEN PLACE. IF THE U.S. WERE TO WITHDRAW ITS MILITARY MISSION, MINIKON STATED THAT THE GOL WOULD CONCLUDE THAT THE U.S. NO LONGER FEELS IT HAS SIGNIFICANT INTERESTS IN LIBERIA OR THAT LIBERIA IS A FRIEND OF ANY IMPORTANCE.

3. MINIKON SAID THAT THE GOL MUST ALSO DRAW CONCLUSIONS OF ITS OWN CONCERNING THE IMPORTANCE GIVEN TO LIBERIA BY THE U.S. FROM A COMPARISON OF THE AMOUNTS OF AID AND CREDITS GIVEN BY THE U.S. TO DIFFERENT AFRICAN COUNTRIES. HE REFERRED REPEATEDLY TO THE \$15 MILLION FMS CREDIT GIVEN TO KENYA AND THE CONTRAST WITH THE \$500,000 PROVIDED THE GOL.

4. COMMENT: MINIKON'S COMMENTS REFLECT WIDELY FELT SUSPICION OF GUINEAN INTENTIONS AGAINST LIBERIA, AS WELL AS THE COMMON BELIEF AMONG LIBERIANS THAT U.S. AID AND CREDITS TO LIBERIA IS NOT COMMENSURATE WITH THE IMPORTANCE TO THE U.S. OF ITS INTERESTS IN LIBERIA.

CARTER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, MILITARY MISSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MONROV02592
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770134-0179
Format: TEL
From: MONROVIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770447/aaaabooo.tel
Line Count: 76
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e2723aa3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 MONROVIA 2369
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2776451
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOL ATTITUDE TOWARD U.S. MILITARY MISSION TO LIBERIA
TAGS: MASS, PFOR, LI, GV
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e2723aa3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009